

Application No. 09/925,881

Amendment dated JANUARY 28, 2005

Reply to Final Office Action dated October 28, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants have carefully reviewed the Advisory Action mailed on January 19, 2005 and the Office Action mailed on October 28, 2004. Applicants respectfully traverse all objections, rejections, and assertions made by the Examiner. With this amendment and request for continued examination, claims 25 and 30 are amended. Claims 25 and 30-34 remain pending.

Claims 25, 30-31, and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Chan in U.S. Patent No. 5,234,002. Amended claim 25 now recites that the male thread includes a first portion and a second portion, and that the second portion is more deformable than the first portion. This defines two structurally-distinct portions of the male thread. In contrast, the male thread in Chan appears to be uniform. Moreover, Chan is completely silent as to the thread being deformable at all, which indicates that the Chan male thread neither expressly nor inherently anticipates each and every element set forth in the claims. Please see MPEP 2131. Accordingly, Chan fails to disclose or teach structurally distinct portions of the male thread. Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 25 is now in condition for allowance.

Regarding claims 30, 31, and 34, claim 30 is similarly amended to more clearly define two structurally-distinct portions of the male thread. For the reasons put forth above, this distinction differentiates claim 30 from Chan. Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 30 as well as claims 31 and 34 depending therefrom are in condition for allowance.

Claims 32-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chan. As described above, claim 30 is patentable over Chan. Because claims 32-33 depend from allowable claim 30, they are also patentable based on these remarks and because they add significant elements to distinguish them from the art. Applicants respectfully submit that these remarks overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

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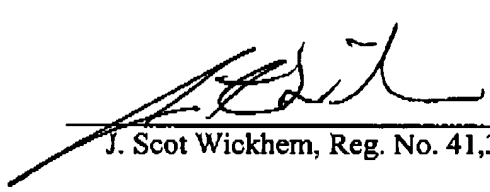
Reexamination and reconsideration are requested. It is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance in due course is also respectfully requested. If a telephone conference might be of assistance, please contact the undersigned attorney at (612) 677-9050.

Respectfully submitted,

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By their attorney,

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